

ADAPTABLE KEYPAD AND BUTTON MECHANISM THEREFOR

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An adaptable keypad or button utilizes a display laminate made up of a driving layer (108), an electrically active ink layer (110), and a transparent conductor layer (112). In a preferred embodiment, the display laminate is placed between a switch (302, 303, 304) and an actuating member. The driving layer has a series of symbols or characters created by conductor patterns (202, 204, 208, 210) in the shape of the symbols or characters. Some of the conductor segments are used exclusively by one character, some are used exclusively by another character, and some may be common to both characters. The conductors making up the desired character or symbol to be displayed are electrically energized, causing a corresponding pattern in the electrically active ink layer to appear. If the character or symbol needs to be changed to the alternate symbol on the button, then the first character image is erased from the active ink, and the second conductor set is electrically energized to form an image of the second character in the active ink.

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